RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF WELLS.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health
FOR THE YEAR 1909.

STREET, SOMERSET,
FEBRUARY 18th, 1910.

To the Rural District Council of Wells.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my Report for the year ending December 31st, 1909.

Area. 58045 acres.

Population. Census 1901—10767. Estimated to middle of 1909 at 10248.

Geology. Dolomitic conglomerate at Chewton Mendip and Westbury; mountain limestone at Priddy; red marl at Dinder, North Wootton, and Rodney Stoke; red marl and river gravel at Wookey; lower lias at West Pennard, Baltonsborough, Butleigh and Walton; alluvium and peat at Glastonbury Moor.

Occupation. Chiefly agricultural, cheese and cider making, dairy farming, paper factories at Wookey and Wookey Hole; lead mines at Priddy. Some of the inhabitants at Butleigh and Walton work at the shoe, leather and skin factories at Street and Glastonbury, and at the quarries at Street.

Birth Rate. 236 births registered (114 males, 122 females); giving a birth rate of 23.02 per 1000 per annum. Seven of the births were illegitimate (3 males, 4 females).

Death Rate. 228 deaths registered (109 males, 119 females); giving a death rate of 22.2 per 1000 per annum.

Excluding 97 deaths registered, of non-residents, from Public Institutions in the district, the *corrected death rate* for the Rural District is 12.7 per 1000 per annum.

Zymotic Death Rate. Three deaths registered from Zymotic disease, giving a *Zymotic rate* of 0.29 per 1000 living.

Infant Mortality. The Infant Mortality per 1000 births is 63.5; 15 deaths under one year being registered.

FOR THE YEAR 1908.

Birth Rate.	Birth rate .. .. per 1000 living	23.3
Death Rate.	Death rate .. .. „ „	18.5
Corrected Death Rate.	Corrected Death rate .. „ „	11.8
Zymotic Death Rate.	Zymotic Death rate .. „ „	0.58
Infant Mortality per 1000 Births.	Infant Mortality per 1000 births	66.7

Table of Deaths.

Ages Table of Deaths:

Under 1 year there were 15 deaths.

1	and under	5	years	there	were	7	deaths
5	„	„ 15	„	„	„	6	„
15	„	„ 25	„	„	„	10	„
25	„	„ 65	„	„	„	95	„
65	and upwards			„	„	95	„

Table of Births.

The Births in the District were distributed as follows:—

Wells Out	71	North Wootton	9
Rodney Stoke	17	Meare	25
Wookey	24	Walton	11
Priddy	6	Butleigh	11
Chewton Mendip	17	West Pennard	20
Dinder	2	Baltonsborough	7
Westbury	7	Sharpham	1
Godney	8		

The Deaths were distributed in the following Districts :—

Wells Out	31	Baltonsborough	10
Westbury	12	Butleigh	9
Rodney Stoke	11	Meare	13
Wookey	14	West Pennard	6
Priddy	5	Walton	7
Chewton Mendip	5	Sharpham	nil
Dinder	2	North Wootton	5
Godney	4	Asylum	93

Causes of Death during the year.

Scarlet Fever	1	Pneumonia	13
Whooping Cough	1	Pleurisy	1
Diphtheria	1	Other diseases of Respiratory organs	3
Enteritis	5	Alcoholisms Cirrhosis of Liver	3
Phthisis Pulmonary Tuberculosis	14	Premature Birth	2
Other Tubercular Diseases	3	Diseases and Accidents of Partruition	5
Cancer Malignant Disease	16	Heart Diseases	29
		Accidents	4
Bronchitis	8	All other Causes	119

Water Supply.

The districts of Butleigh, Chewton Mendip, Dinder, Priddy, Rodney Stoke, Godney, part of Polsham, West Pennard, Wookey Hole, Baltonsborough, and Horrington have an ample supply of good water; private supplies, together with the Glastonbury, Street, and Shepton Mallet Councils' supplies contributing respectively their portions to several of these villages.

The further supply to West Pennard is now completed and water being laid on to a large number of dwellings.

North Wootton. The negotiations for the purchase of a spring by the R.D. Council have fallen through—in consequence of the insufficiency of the supply. The matter is still receiving the attention of the Council.

The district of Meare and Westhay is dependent mostly on shallow wells, and in some instances on the river for their supply. The possibility of pollution, and in dry weather the running short of the supply and the dependence on the river, are unsatisfactory features in the supply of this district. The supply for the outlying part of the district also, *e.g.*—Ashcott corner, which draws from the ditches or the rhine, is also unsatisfactory.

Part of the Westbury district is well supplied, and the districts of Wookey and Henton have a fairly good supply from well water.

Walton is dependent on wells, which in dry weather soon become exhausted. With the Street main so near—an extension therefrom would be a great boon to this district.

The arrangements for the supply of Sharpham from the Street main are nearly completed, permission having been giving by the Local Government Board for the carrying out of this scheme.

I have examined a number of samples of water during the year.

Sewerage and Drainage.

There is no general system of drainage in the district. At Priddy, Henton, Easton, Westbury, and Horrington there are no drains. At Wookey and Draycott some of the old sewers have been pulled up and new ones laid. At Coxley a new length of sewer has also been laid. At Chewton Mendip there is a sewer, with house drains connected, discharging into the river. At Draycott and Rodney Stoke there are sewers and open drains discharging into the moors. At Dinder there is one small length of sewer. At Meare, West Pennard, Baltonsborough, Butleigh, and Walton there are sewers or drains discharging either into the river, the ditches, or on to the land. In the three former parishes the common sewers have been extended, and in the two latter cleansed during the year. As reported by the Inspectors of Nuisances, in the district a number of new drains have been laid and old ones repaired and also new sewers laid and old ones repaired to abate existing nuisances. Privies with cesspits are principally in use in the district. As I have stated in previous reports these are naturally a source of danger from their infrequent emptying and

the possibility of adjacent water supplies becoming contaminated. The system of earth closets is encouraged where practicable. From the reports of the Inspectors of Nuisances (which are annexed) it will be seen that 14 cures of defective privy accommodation have been dealt with during the year.

There is no regular system for the disposal of excrement in the district; the greater part, however, is placed on the land.

Wells Sewage Works.

Accompanied by the Inspector of Nuisances, I have visited these works at intervals during the year. Additional filter beds of a new system have been installed by the Wells City Council and are nearly completed.

I trust the result will be satisfactory.

Prevalence of Disease.

Sixty-four cases of notifiable disease have been reported during the year, against seventeen for the year 1908—a large increase. Twenty-six cases of Diphtheria: twenty-one in the Wells Out District, one from Rodney Stoke, three from Wookey, and one from North Wootton. Twenty-seven cases of Scarlet Fever: one from the Wells Out District, four from North Wootton, one from Meare, seven from Walton, three from Butleigh, two from Baltonsborough, and nine from West Pennard. Seven cases of Erysipelas: three from Wells Out District, one from Westbury, one from Wookey, and two from Chewton Mendip. Three cases of Enteric Fever: two from the Wells Out District, and one from Wookey.

The various premises have been visited by the Inspectors of Nuisances and in most cases by myself; the sanitary conditions have been inquired into and investigation made as to the possible source of the disease. In some cases of Diphtheria antidiphtheritic serum has been supplied by the Rural District Council with gratifying results. One death only being registered from the disease. Notices for isolation and disinfection are given in each case, but as I have previously reported the carrying out of these injunctions is not an easy matter especially in cottages with scanty accommodation. The want of an Isolation Hospital for the whole district is at times keenly felt. Disinfection of the various premises has been carried out afterwards by the Inspectors of Nuisances.

Two cases of Tuberculosis under the Poor Law were notified during the year: one from Westbury-sub-Mendip, and one from Baltonsborough. No voluntary system is in operation in the district. By direction of the Rural District Council I made an attempt to secure this—unsuccessfully. Apart from a private Sanatorium in the district—no hospital accommodation is provided for tuberculosis patients (apart from the Workhouse Infirmary). Some cases, through local subscribers, are sent to Sanatoriums elsewhere.

In February owing to the prevalence of Whooping Cough in the Horrington district, I advised the closure of the School for a period. In the same month the Henton School was closed owing to the prevalence of Influenza. In March owing to the prevalence of German Measles at Walton, this School was closed.

In April a serious outbreak of Diphtheria occurred at Coxley, the School being closed. In May owing to an outbreak of Scarlet Fever at West Pennard, this School was closed. In October owing to the prevalence of Whooping Cough at Priddy, the School was closed. At the same time numerous cases of the same disease occurred at Chewton Mendip and Rodney Stoke.

In November and December a number of cases of Mumps occurred amongst children attending the Wookey Hole and Dinder Schools, and in November Whooping Cough was prevalent in the Westbury District.

A scheme for the prompt notification of all children kept at home with illness of a suspicious character or who have shown symptoms of infectious diseases has been introduced through the County Medical Officer of Health (Dr. Savage) whereby the Medical Officer of Health is at once informed of the presence of any of these diseases in a School.

The prompt exclusion by the Medical Officer of Health of all children suffering from infectious disease or because of any infectious disease in the home will be carried out in accordance with a definite prearranged scheme. It is anticipated that this procedure will minimise to a large extent the extension of infectious diseases amongst the children attending the Schools in the district.

Inspections have been made by the Medical Inspectors appointed by the County Council, of scholars attending the various Schools in the district.

I have also visited various Schools in the district during the year.

Isolation Hospital

None. The need of one at times is severely felt where it is impossible to secure satisfactory home-isolation. Cottages at Worminster are still retained by the Rural District Council for the isolation of Smallpox cases, should any arise; but their inaccesibility preclude their use for general isolation purposes.

Housing of the Working Classes.

Visits paid with the Inspectors, from whose annexed Reports it will be seen that house to house inspection of various districts continue to be made by them, with the result that any unsatisfactory conditions found have been reported upon and orders issued for the remedying of them.

Eight cases of overcrowding have been dealt with, supervision is exercised over the erection of new houses, a certificate of occupation being granted by the Rural District Council only on a satisfactory report from the Inspector—seventeen such certificates have been granted during the year.

Disinfection Means.

Fumigation by Sulphur Dioxide or Formalin. Disinfectants, where necessary, are supplied gratuitously by the Rural District Council. All premises from which infectious diseases have been notified, have afterwards been disinfected by the Inspector of Nuisances. The provision of a suitable disinfecting apparatus for clothing, bedding, etc., would be a distinct gain for the district.

Dairies—Cowsheds and Milkshops.

The formation of a Register of the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops in the district under Article 13 of the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order of 1885, is now in preparation. So far 249 such premises have been registered, most of which have been inspected by the Inspectors during the year. Regulations have been issued by the Rural District Council with reference to their lighting, ventilation, cleansing, drainage, and water supply; also directions for securing the cleanliness of Milk-stores, Milk-shops and of Milk vessels used for containing milk for sale by persons following the trade of Cowkeepers or Dairymen.

The Dairy produce of the district is very considerable, the milk supply being generally of excellent quality. No case of tuberculosis milk has come to my knowledge.

Eleven cases of Anthrax have been notified from the district during the year. The necessary steps were taken by the Police, but in each case the premises are visited by the Inspector of Nuisances or myself.

General Inspections.

Slaughter-houses, Bake-houses, and Public Schools inspected. No Bye-laws are in force in the district. The adoption of suitable ones would greatly enhance the control of the Council.

Factory and Workshops Act, 1901.

Inspections of the various factories, workshops, and home-workers' premises have been made by the Inspector of Nuisances and myself. Their sanitation, ventilation, means of escape in case of fire and provision of suitable sanitary conveniences attended to.

Factories inspected ..	17	Workshops	50
Bake-houses	11	Work-places	48

I append the Tables of Statistics as required by the Local Government Board together with the Reports of the Inspectors of Nuisances, to whose co-operation I am again greatly indebted.

I have the honour to be,
Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

GEORGE W. EGLINTON.

Reports and Summary of Inspectors of Nuisances.

No. 1 DISTRICT.

Inspector of Nuisances Summary for the year ended 31st December, 1909.

The following is a summary of the cases reported by me to the Council, and dealt with by order :—

	No. of cases.
Dwelling houses with insufficient privy accommodation	7
Dwelling houses overcrowded	6
Dwelling houses unfit for human habitation, Notices served, houses done up or closed	8
Infected dwellings : Occupiers served with notice as to isolation of patients, disinfection, &c., Disinfectants supplied by the Council	29
Dwellings and clothing disinfected as directed by the Medical Officer of Health	29
Public School premises disinfected	2
New dwelling houses erected for which certificates of occupation have been granted by the Council	16
Dilapidated and dangerous buildings repaired	6
Dilapidated and dangerous privies repaired	58
Nuisances arising from foul and choked drains, foul accumulations, &c.	35
Animals kept in such a state as to be a nuisance	1
New drains laid and old ones repaired	23
New sewers laid and old ones repaired	5
Slaughter houses and public schools inspected (no bye-laws in force)	19
Pollution of stream dealt with	1
Samples of water submitted to the County Analyst	2
Samples of water submitted to the Medical Officer of Health	4
Wells cleaned out and protected from pollution	3
Formal notices served by the Inspector	124

Factory and Workshops Act, 1901.

There are registered in the District : 9 Factories, 29 Workshops, 48 Workplaces, 7 Bake houses and 2 Outworkers, total ... 95

Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order, 1885.

Since September 30th, I have registered 149 Dairies and Cowsheds, most of them I have visited and inspected.

In addition to the above, a number of inspections have been made in my rounds, and verbal notice given to abate nuisances.

PHILIP WILLIAMS, *Inspector No. 1 District.*

No. 2 DISTRICT.

Inspector of Nuisances Summary for the year ended 31st December, 1909.

The following is a summary of cases reported to the Council, and dealt with by order :—

	No. of Cases.
Infected Dwellings : Occupiers served with notices as to isolation and disinfection (disinfectants supplied)	22
Infected dwellings and schoolrooms : Disinfected as directed by Medical Officer of Health	22
Common sewers extended at Meare, Baltonsborough and West Pennard	3
" cleansed at Butleigh and Walton	2
New drains laid and old ones repaired	5
Liquid manure tank provided	1
Samples of water submitted to Medical Officer of Health	2
Dwelling houses with defective privy accommodation	7
Overcrowded dwellings dealt with	2
Dwellings unfit for human habitation dealt with	2
Animals so kept as to be a nuisance	2
Nuisances arising from foul accumulations, &c.	6
Proceedings taken, and Order of Justices obtained, to prevent recurrence of nuisances caused by putrid flesh	1
Pollution of stream : Special report dealing with village of Butleigh Wootton	1
New dwelling inspected for certificate of occupation	1
Slaughter houses inspected (no bye-laws)	4
Formal notices served and letters written thereon	66

Factories and Workshops Act, 1901.

The following are registered :—7 Factories, 24 Workshops, 4 Bake houses, 40 Workplaces.—No Homeworkers lists supplied.

These have been inspected and are in fair condition.

The Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order of 1885.

Regulations are now in force in the district :—100 Farm Premises are registered, and their inspection is in progress. 75 have been inspected.

A large number of re-inspections have been made, and verbal notices given by me in my rounds and periodical inspections.

EDWIN H. PADFIELD, *Inspector No. 2 District.*